The
791 pi-mu, a Lolo magician, is invited to perform on this occasion. In every Lolo village there are always one or two families that specialize in magic, a profession hereditary from father to son for many generations. The pi-mu are outstanding personalities among the Lolo. In their houses are kept a number of Lolo scriptures for use in festivals, sickness, fortune-telling, the wedding ceremony, and all kinds of magic performances. The
●[212] scriptures are in the Lolo written language which survives to this day mainly because of its transmission by the pi-mu from master to pupil. The common people have no occasion to use the written language, which actually does not occupy as important a position in Lolo society as is generally believed.

When there is sickness in the family, the Lolo do not
756 depend upon medicine for a cure, but ask the pi-mu to perform magic to drive off the evil spirits. They believe that
[753] sickness is caused by ghosts and goblins, and can be cured through exorcism. During the ceremony, as mentioned earlier, they sacrifice victims, such as an ox, sheep, pig, or
[782] chicken, according to the nature of the sickness and the economic condition of the family. To kill cattle or chickens for
[574] such an occasion provides the family with an opportunity for a big feast, which helps to vary the monotony of life and a regular vegetable diet.

[46] Praying for rain is an event of great importance.
782 Rain is scarce on the mountains where the Lolo live and cultivate their dry land. During a year of drought, they pray to
791 the mountain spirit for rain. The Lolo do not have a monotheistic concept and believe in an unseen world where a ghost or
[771] goblin exists in every object. So they invite the pi-mu to perform magic to control the environment around them. When the Han-Chinese pray for rain, they direct their prayers to the dragon-king in the waters; the Lolo, on the other hand, notice
[821] that rain comes from the mountain top and so they pray to the mountain spirit. This illustrates how religious ideas are influenced by environment. In praying for rain, they also seek the help of the pi-mu. After having killed a white sheep or a white chicken, they would go up the mountain and from the precipices scatter the blood-splattered white feathers to look like snow while the pi-mu chants the scripture and performs magic to beg for sweet rain. The rainmaking ceremony is very important because it is directly related to their economic life. Insufficient rain will affect the harvest of corn, buckwheat, oats, and other grains and result in a food shortage for the family.

791 The pi-mu is a unique figure in Lolo society and quite
793 different from ordinary people in his responsibility. He spe-
756 cializes in religious and magic activities. There is at least one pi-mu in each village, either a black or a white Lolo, but at present most pi-mu are white Lolo. Only a male can become a pi-mu. He goes through a tutorial system, the only kind of formal instruction among the Lolo which requires learning and training. Tutorial instruction is usually handed down from father to son or from uncle to nephew as a family occupation. The pi-mu keeps in the family scriptural books, [779] including those on ancestral legends, fortune-telling, divination, invocation, exorcism, praying for rain, and others, all transmitted and copied in Lolo. [95] The Lolo written language is not commonly used, and its preservation and transmission are to be credited mainly to the pi-mu. ● [212]

791 Besides the pi-mu, there is another kind of magician
756 called su-nieh. The su-nieh has no tutor. He is just an ordi-
[787] nary person possessed by a su-nieh ghost that causes sickness or loss of mind, but later, after having sacrificed to it a white sheep and a white chicken in the woods and having recovered from sickness, he becomes a su-nieh. Both men and women can become su-nieh, but the art is not transmittible and also scriptures do not exist. Ordinarily, when a su-nieh performs [755] magic to cure sickness, he beats a sheepskin drum, whirls and dances — his whole body shivering and his mouth muttering chants — moves around and imprecates to the utmost of his ability.

Although the pi-mu and the su-nieh belong to different systems, they have the common aim of practicing magic. The duty of a pi-mu is very complicated, while that of a su-nieh is comparatively simple. We shall describe separately their work and performances to make clear the position of magic among the Lolo.

787 First, let us discuss divination, a form of divine rev-
elation that foretells good or bad fortune. There are two opposite kinds of divination. The first kind is prediction made by the god through human mouth, or the communication of divine will by the priest in forecasting future developments — a type of divination practiced universally in Siberia, Africa, and Polynesia. The other kind is practiced through the observation of physical objects or of animal entrails, bones, skeletons, and other things. In order to foretell the future, the magician has to have strict technical training to enable him to observe the important positions and spots of animal bones and entrails. It is to this kind that the entire system of Lolo divination belongs.

5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

the mediums and to prove to the people that they could not do all they claimed to do, I offered a large reward to any who would call up the spirit of the dead Englishman so that he, through the medium, could hold conversation with me. This was merely what they every day claimed to do for inquirers of their own people. No one ever claimed the reward. Possibly the native mediums were nervous of the foreigner, or maybe they thought that I should never pay them even if they fulfilled my conditions.

In connection with the wizards of Nosuland there is one thing that is of far more interest than all their séances or communion with demons. They are the possessors of the written language and literature of Nosuland. This is a field that has been almost unexplored, and that possibly holds secrets of immense interest and value to the students of history and philology.

5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

CHAPTER XXV

THE WRITTEN LANGUAGE AND MANUSCRIPTS

212 THE various tribes of the Nosu race are probably unique among Chinese aboriginals in that they possess a written language. Other tribes have stated that they possess books of their own, but all my efforts to obtain copies have failed.

When the late Mr Colborne Baber, in his journey through West China, found out that the Nosu had a written language of their own, and obtained specimens of their books, it was naturally looked on as an important discovery. In the years that have elapsed since that discovery not a great deal has been done to follow it up. The literature of these hill-people is still practically unexplored. It is possible that in these manuscript books there may be hidden some important facts which will cast light on early Chinese history.

A stranger who is not closely acquainted with Chinese writing might at first sight easily mistake a Nosu book for a Chinese, and yet they are absolutely dissimilar. I have found no characters in Nosu books like those in Chinese, except the numerals, and even these are not quite the same. A glance at the list of Nosu words side by side with the Chinese equivalents will at once show that the two are totally different.

Whence came those Nosu ideographs? They could not have been adapted from the Chinese, as some have erroneously supposed. If such were the case, then we are in presence

5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

of a people who must rank on a higher level intellectually than the Chinese, for the Nosu ideographs are much simpler than the Chinese. I do not think that is a position anyone who has examined the question would care to take up. It is true that many of the people living around China have adopted the Chinese written characters, and this fact has helped in making intercourse between different peoples feasible. On an ocean steamer you may see students from Japan, Korea and South China, who do not know a word of each other's spoken language, able to understand each other by writing Chinese ideographs. To these each man gives his own sound, which is not known by the others, but the idea conveyed by the written character is the same to each. I have been in a shop in French Tongking where there were several Annamese gentlemen present. They knew no English and I could not speak Annamese. But we managed to get on together by writing, with pencil, Chinese characters on a rough slip of paper. When we started reading what we had written we were at sea again, for each read his writing in his own way. As long as we confined ourselves to writing and looking we got on all right. It was a kind of deaf-and-dumb language to each of us, and yet each could read it to himself but not to the other. As there is a regular way of writing the different strokes in the Chinese characters, those who use them in conversation often just trace their imaginary outline on the palm of the left hand, when as a rule the looker-on can read the invisible but very real characters. What an interesting state of affairs—invisible writing for temporarily deaf-and-dumb people. The wonders of the Chinese written language have not yet been fully exhausted by Westerners, who make a kind of fetish of their romanised

5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

000 method of writing. There are some visionaries who imagine that before long China will throw over its method of writing and adopt the romanised method. Such a change is not likely to be made in this generation or the next.

212 While the peoples around China have adopted Chinese written characters, the Nosu have kept to their own. There must have been, in ages gone by, a larger number of people who could read. Now the wizards are practically the only people who have a knowledge of the written language.

There is no such thing as an alphabet in Nosu. The same principle that rules in Chinese rules also in Nosu. Each ideograph represents an idea. The language is monosyllabic. As mentioned before, vowel sounds end the words.

214 [791] Nearly all the books are in manuscript, and are handed down from father to son. The wizards who possess the key to these books are not very eager to pass on their knowledge to others, and I have not heard that others are very anxious to share this knowledge. I have been told that there are one or two Earth Eyes who are able to read Nosu, but I have no personal acquaintance with them. One Earth Eye, who was very friendly, had wooden blocks cut for the printing of a Nosu book, and then printed off quite a number, which he gave away to any who wished for a copy. On the back of the cover was the legend:

> A gift of a book to the princely man,
> With the hope that the princely man will live it out,
> If the princely man does not read the book,
> Will he kindly pass it on to someone else.

The Earth Eye was evidently imitating the Chinese, who look upon the printing and giving away of books as a very potent way of storing up merit in the bank of the other world.

5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

Most of the Nosu manuscripts are kept by the Pee-mo in their houses, not far from the wood fires. The smoke rapidly turns the colour of the bamboo paper, and soon gives it the appearance of antiquity. A comparatively recent book thus looks old, and readily deceives one who gets hold of it.

Similar to the Chinese, the Nosu writing is from top to bottom of page. It is vertical and not horizontal. Unlike the Chinese, however, it begins at the left of the page and book.

Here are a few Nosu words with Chinese equivalents:

Nearly all the books I have obtained have been books dealing with diseases and demon possession. These books form the wizard's stock in trade for the casting out of these

7: Clarke M-3 (no date) 1911 AE5 Miao
Lolo AE4

172 conspicuous on the plain. Some of these mounds have been opened, and in them have been found rough unhewn stones and burnt bricks of an unusually large size, marked with a peculiar pattern. Both Chinese and No-su are agreed that the Yao-ren were not Miao.

721 The ramifications of the race to which the No-su belong are most intricate, and the many names by which they are known are very puzzling. In Szechwan Province, north of the Yangtze River, and west of Suifu and Kiatingfu, is a large tract of country occupied by independent Lo-lo. This is sometimes called the Pa-pu country. There are chronic hostilities between them and the Chinese, from which the latter suffer most. They are constantly raiding Chinese territory and murdering as many as they can catch, or carrying them off to be held as slaves for ransom. They treat their captives most cruelly, and the Chinese show no mercy to them when they are able to retaliate.

212 In 1878, Mr. Colbourne Baber, British Resident at Chungking, travelled on the borders of the independent Lo-lo territory, but was not able to enter it. All around the border are some "tame" Lo-los dwelling among the Chinese, and Mr. Baber made the acquaintance of some of them. One of them gave him some pages of

7: Clarke M-3 (no date) 1911 AE5 Miao
Lolo AE4

Lo-lo characters, but could not read or interpret them. They were evidently ideographs, and suggested a clumsy attempt to imitate Chinese characters. This Lo-lo writing, and an account of Mr. Baber's journey, were published by the Royal Geographical Society of London in the same or following year; but is now out of print.[1]

Mr. Baber used to tell one story of his journey in that region which is amusing and worth repeating. He had put up one night in a Chinese stockaded village of between one and two hundred families, close to the border of the Lo-lo territory. He was lodged in a loft where he noticed a large heap of stone in one corner. A few days previously the village had been entered by a party of about thirty Lo-lo and the custom-house pillaged. Mr. Baber asked his host why the stones were placed on the loft, and the man explained they were there ready to be thrown at the Lo-lo if they should come; but he added, "The Lo-lo can throw farther and aim better than we can." "Do you not think," said Mr. Baber, "it was a shameful thing for thirty Lo-lo to enter a place like this, where there are so many men, and pillage the custom-house?" "Of course," replied his host, "it was a

[1] See *Special Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society*, vol. i.

2: Wiens G-4 (no date) 1954 AF17 South China
Lolo AE 4

101 The derivation of the term Lolo is supposed to be as follows. At the close of the Sui Dynasty (581-618 A.D.) the outstanding leaders among the Man were bestowed the name of Kuei-chu. a term designating the chief who headed the shamanistic ceremonies in sacrifices to spirits. Literally it means "Master of the Spirits". The people of the Lo-tien area of southern Kuei-chou (where the Lolo were dominant) (See Photo 11) then called the Kuei-chu of the Lo Clan by the abbreviated term Lo-kuei ("Lo-spirit"). This term became erroneously changed to Lu-lu and subsequently to Lo-lo.[81]

564 It is very clear. said Eickstedt in 1944, that the source
791 and origin of the Lolo lie in the north. Culture, economy
212 and even physical feature types point toward the north.
171 As the Lolo culture moved southward, it became watered down. The core of the northern group in recent years was built around the so-called Independent Lolo lords of Ta-liang Shan in southwestern Ssu-ch'uan. Here a blood-proud caste of nobility, the Black-bones, who fought, rode, herded horses and ruled, oversaw a stratum of underlings, the White-bones, who took care of the daily bread, and a stratum of slaves. The latter were formed from the intermixture of the original inhabitants with numberless former Han-Chinese who had been robbed and kidnapped and had forgot their heritage and now took themselves to be Lolo. Here in the Ta-liang Shan the singular culture of the entire folk has been expressed most strongly. Intermarriage between castes was punished by death. The witch-doctors and rulers even had an entirely separate script, which, besides serving cult purposes primarily, also had practical uses. But this ended at the Yun-nan borders. The farther south one traveled, the more one found that Lolo independence was reduced and the less there was of social stratification. In places in Yun-nan proper, the script, the horse-herding, and the name Black-bone are completely unknown among the Lolo.[82]

142 The types found among the Lolo in different localities show extraordinary differentiation in significant ways, according to Eickstedt. Thus, in Burma the clear, high Mongol racial element from the South China orbit is unmistakable, and this also is to be found in southeast and southern Yun-nan. In Ssu-ch'uan the middle China element is preponderant among the masses, while in the upper stratum of Blackbones, the tall-statured element with features of high relief, that is, the Europoid type, is clearly discern-

[175 cont.]

142 582 [177] marry only with persons of the same tribe. A fact, however, which does not prevent them, as we have indicated above, from adopting the customs and even the costumes of the other groups, but without going as far as a "misalliance."

181 While the "Lolo" of China have retained the character of warriors and plunderers, the "Lolo" of Tonkin are of a peaceful and rather indolent disposition, which frequently places them in a position of inferiority in relation to their more energetic and active neighbors.

273 276 [176] They often use alcohol, tobacco, and especially opium to excess.

197 The "Lolo" of Upper Tonkin use Burmo-Tibetan idioms, whose vocabularies vary noticeably from one tribe to another.

193 The elements of the sentence follow one another in the following order: subject, adjective, direct complement, verb, indirect complement, preposition.

Example: My good father sells (his) house to (a) man.
(of) me the father good house sells man to.

198 212 They use the "kouan-hoa" and sometimes the "Thai" as languages of commerce; they use Chinese characters for their writing.

They have no special form of writing and are not acquainted with the writing used by the "Lolo" of Yunnan.

153 Moreover, they are rather intelligent and capable of receiving a certain degree of culture.

291 [177] The men are progressively adopting the costume of the "Thai"; however, they preserve a suit of the distinctive tribal costume in which to be dressed after their death, so that their ancestors may be able to recognize them. The "Lolo" costume consists:

1. Of a short jacket, opened widely in front of the chest and not reaching below the belt.

2. Of a wide pantaloon, bearing at the lower part of the legs an embroidered band done with red-and-yellow thread and representing squares and triangles separated by broken lines.

3. Of a turban of very dark-blue material, whose extremities bear embroidery similar to that on the pantaloon.

[302] No part of the head is shaved. The hair is wound in a chignon behind the head and bound in the turban.

[181 cont.]

769 778 nine knots for a woman, serve as armatures for figurines made from tufts of paper. These figurines, which are of a height of about ten centimeters, are fastened to the partition which forms the ancestral altar.

793 The "Lolo" have priests-sorcerers who pass down the traditions by word of mouth.

181 53 The "Lolo" are of a rather happy disposition, and like the "Meo" they neglect no opportunity for feasting. They perform singing dances, the boys on one side, and the girls on the other. These dances are accompanied by the musical instruments of which we have spoken above.

[182] The "F'ou-la"

101 [131] The "F'ou-la" form a tribe of the "Lolo" group which is represented in Tonkin by only a hundred people, spread in small hamlets the length of the frontier, in the regions of Hoang-Su-Phi, Muong-khuong, and Baxat.

The "Thai" call them the "P'ou-la."

In their dialect, the "F'ou-la" call themselves by the name of "Peu-pa."

101 582 [167] Like the other "Lolo," the "F'ou-la" come from the provinces of the south of China and are extremely mixed with the other tribes of the frontier zone, but they also preserve their original characters by avoiding all intermarriage with their neighbors. They maintain their special type as described above with reference to the "Lolo." [181] They are timid and gentle, which constitutes a weakness in relation to the neighboring tribes, who are more energetic.

197 The vocabulary of the "F'ou-la" differs noticeably from that of the "Lolo," but evidently is related to the dialects of the group; the sentence structure is identical with that of the "Lolo."

212 198 They are not acquainted with any writing; they employ Chinese characters. Their language of commerce is the "kouan-hoa."

342 231 The "F'ou-la" live in cabins of two principal models:

1. Cabins on piles, of the type used among the "Thai," but consisting of a flooring raised only a very little above the ground

[185 cont.]

773 The "Man" called "Yem-pa."
[101] The "Meo" called "Méo-pa."

[186] When the mother was making the first garment for her children, she commenced with the ancestors of the "Thai" and of the "Man," to whom she gave very good measure. Next, the piece of material being more than half used up, she cut shorter the garment for the ancestor of the "Méo." After this so little material remained that the ancestor of the "Xa-pho" could have only the little jacket still worn by the "Lolo."

[187] The "Ho-nhi"

101 This "Lolo" tribe is represented in Tonkin, between Phongtho
131 and Trinhthuong, only by a few hamlets containing a total of from
161 200 to 300 individuals. Important groupings of "Ho-nhi" are settled in southern Ynnnan, particularly in the region of Pou-eurl. They still are called by the names of "Ouo-ni" or "Wo-ni."

[167] They come from western Yunnan.

They have the general appearance of the "Méo," but they
142 have skin noticeably darker than the latter. They have very sturdy
147 constitutions, but are of a gentle and apprehensive disposition which
181 impels them to isolation.

They speak a "Lolo" dialect rather different from that of the
197 other tribes of the group. They use the "kouan-hoa" as their com-
198 mercial language. They have a very limited number of literate
212 persons.

The costume of the men resembles that of the "Méo" of the
291 region, but the blue color of the costume is a very dark shade.

[177] The women likewise wear clothing of a very dark-blue material, which includes the following:

1. A jacket reaching down to the knees. This jacket is slit on the left side from the bottom up to the belt. The front is lifted up and fastened to the belt on the right side.

2. A breast covering of triangular shape. The point of the triangle is at the top, held about the neck by a cord. The lower